

best under the circumstances. Congress needs to change the circumstances; comprehensive reform and, at a minimum, a reauthorization of the corporate environmental income tax—twelve one hundredths of a per cent (which expired on December 31, 1995) should be the next course of action.

Mr. Chairman, this is a good bill for science, a good bill for the space program, and a good will for the environment. It aptly illustrates the tremendous leadership provided by my friend from New York, Chairman WALSH, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

The CHAIRMAN. The Committee will rise informally.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FOLEY) assumed the Chair.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A message in writing from the President of the United States was communicated to the House by Ms. Wanda Evans, one of his secretaries.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Committee will resume its sitting.

DEPARTMENTS OF VETERANS AFFAIRS AND HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT, AND INDEPENDENT AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2002

The Committee resumed its sitting.

The CHAIRMAN. All time for general debate has expired.

Pursuant to the rule, the bill shall be considered for amendment under the 5-minute rule. The amendment printed in House Report 107-164 may be offered only by a Member designated in the report and only at the appropriate point in the reading of the bill, shall be considered read, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question.

During consideration of the bill for amendment, the Chair may accord priority in recognition to a Member offering an amendment that he has printed in the designated place in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD. Those amendments will be considered read.

The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 2620

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the following sums are appropriated, out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, for the Departments of Veteran Affairs and Housing and Urban Development, and for sundry independent agencies, boards, commissions, corporations, and offices for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2002, and for other purposes, namely:

TITLE I—DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

VETERANS BENEFITS ADMINISTRATION COMPENSATION AND PENSIONS (INCLUDING TRANSFERS OF FUNDS)

For the payment of compensation benefits to or on behalf of veterans and a pilot pro-

gram for disability examinations as authorized by law (38 U.S.C. 107, chapters 11, 13, 18, 51, 53, 55, and 61); pension benefits to or on behalf of veterans as authorized by law (38 U.S.C. chapters 15, 51, 53, 55, and 61; 92 Stat. 2508); and burial benefits, emergency and other officers' retirement pay, adjusted-service credits and certificates, payment of premiums due on commercial life insurance policies guaranteed under the provisions of article IV of the Soldiers' and Sailors' Civil Relief Act of 1940 (50 U.S.C. App. 540 et seq.) and for other benefits as authorized by law (38 U.S.C. 107, 1312, 1977, and 2106, chapters 23, 51, 53, 55, and 61; 50 U.S.C. App. 540-548; 43 Stat. 122, 123; 45 Stat. 735; 76 Stat. 1198), \$24,944,288,000, to remain available until expended: *Provided*, That not to exceed \$17,940,000 of the amount appropriated under this heading shall be reimbursed to "General operating expenses" and "Medical care" for necessary expenses in implementing those provisions authorized in the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1990, and in the Veterans' Benefits Act of 1992 (38 U.S.C. chapters 51, 53, and 55), the funding source for which is specifically provided as the "Compensation and pensions" appropriation: *Provided further*, That such sums as may be earned on an actual qualifying patient basis, shall be reimbursed to "Medical facilities revolving fund" to augment the funding of individual medical facilities for nursing home care provided to pensioners as authorized.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

Mr. Chairman, I really wanted to take this moment as we begin full consideration of this bill to thank the chairman, the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH) and the ranking member, the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MOLLOHAN), for their work and the improvements that we have been able to afford the citizens of our country in this fiscal year 2002 appropriation bill for the Veterans Administration, the Housing and Urban Development Department, the Environmental Protection Agency, NASA, and the National Science Foundation.

The bill has many good points. Certainly the National Science Foundation increase, the President asked for an increase, we provided over an 8 percent increase in this budget. And even in smaller programs, like the Neighborhood Reinvestment Corporation, which has such a fine track record in communities across our country, a respectable increase. But I have to say that in other accounts this particular bill does not have adequate funding.

Other Members have talked about HUD's housing programs, and without question the reductions in public housing modernization, decreased by 15 percent; and community development block grants, every single community in this country affected by that cut by 6 percent; and homeless assistance down by nearly 9 percent. We still have not completely solved that problem across our country. The impact on Americans as a result of this underfunding of the HUD programs will be felt from coast to coast.

The bill eliminates the popular AmeriCorps program. HUD's Rural

Housing and Economic Development programs have been eliminated. Empowerment zones, Enterprise communities, and the Public Housing Drug Elimination Grant Program I will talk about in a moment.

Now, I wanted to say a word about the Environmental Protection Agency, also a reduction, and as important as the reduction, the shift in responsibility for enforcement to the States. In the case of Ohio, my home State, The Washington Post reported just a couple weeks ago "Nowhere are the problems cited by the EPA studies of State enforcement performance more in evidence than Ohio where so much backlog remains. During the past 2 years, 72 percent of Ohio's plants and refineries had violations of the Clean Water Act, a third of the plants were in violation of the Clean Air Act, and over a third of the factories were found to be operating with expired permits required under the Clean Water Act."

So we have to be conscious that as this bill is considered, there are serious imperfections that are contained within it.

Others have referenced the veterans portion of the budget. We hear lots about the greatest generation; books have been written, movies, and we are about to build the World War II memorial, one of the most important pieces of legislation I have ever sponsored here in this Congress. Yet the Veterans Medical Care budget, the budget that will actually go to care for those that the Nation says it cares so very much about, underfunded by nearly \$.5 billion over what the administration needs in order to accommodate the lines that are out there in hospital after hospital.

So as the bill moves forward, I really do look forward to working with the chairman and the ranking member to perfect it.

And I just wanted to say a word about the amendment I will be offering later this afternoon, because I heard my colleague, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. OXLEY), come to the floor a little earlier and speak against the drug elimination program in public housing, and my friend and colleague from Ohio is a former FBI officer.

I was very surprised to hear that. But I have to tell him that perhaps the part of Ohio he represents is not like my own. But his position is going to hurt Cincinnati, it will hurt Dayton, it is going to hurt Toledo, it is going to hurt Steubenville, and it is going to hurt Lima, because in fact the drug elimination program goes to the very heart of communities where drug lords and this drug trade took control of people living under the most vulnerable of circumstances.

The local policing forces, sometimes out of sheer racism and sometimes out of the fact that when they wore a uniform they were not accepted inside